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Budget Making in a Democracy. By E. A. FITZPATRICK. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1918. Pp. x, 317.)

This book contains much useful information and comment regarding the many aspects of the budget problem as it affects our national and state governments. The major portion of the book is devoted to a somewhat violent attack upon the so-termed executive budget, which the author deems to be an autocratic device. His main proposition is that "budget-making must in the final analysis be a legislative function, and American democracy will not if it knows what it is doing, tie the hands of the legislature in any way in the legislative process" (p. 126). His optimism regarding the legislative budget seems to be due, in part at least, to his special experience in Wisconsin, from which he draws by far the larger part of his illustrations of state practice. This portion of his book contains much of truth, mixed with question-begging arguments, and loses something in impressiveness from a lack of judicial poise.

The author, however, admits that under present conditions the legislature is far from being a suitable organization for carrying out the budget-making process. He thinks that the legislature may be made an efficient budget-making authority by changes in its rules and in the organization of its committees. He also favors lump sum rather than segregated appropriations and continuing appropriations, requiring positive action on the part of the legislature to repeal, rather than mere failure to act, in the case of the well-established services. He considers the governor's veto of items as a useless and even vicious device.

The book shows signs of having been somewhat hastily put together. It contains no index.

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The Five Republics of Central America. By DANA G. MUNRO. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1918. Pp. 319.)

The author has traveled from one end of the region he describes to the other and the value of his book lies even more in the information acquired from contact with the people he met than in the results of his extensive library research.

The first half of the volume discusses the characteristics of the republics. The contrasts between their civilizations and the seeming